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For Immediate Release

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**Environment Department, EPA Issue Compliance Order to Lumberton
Water System to Protect Users**

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have issued a cooperative Compliance Order to the Lumberton Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (MDWCA). This order follows numerous violations of clean drinking water standards and requires the system to come into compliance with the state's health-based drinking water requirements.

"Access to safe drinking water is the right of every New Mexican," said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. "This association has failed in providing this basic right to this community for far too long."

"Under the new administration, NMED is focused on moving more quickly to take care of these problems," Secretary Curry continued. "We are faster in enforcement and in the vital protection we provide to the state's citizens every time they take a drink."

The Compliance Order requires the Lumberton MDWCA to meet the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for microbiological contaminants, comply with treatment techniques required for filtration and disinfection in surface water systems, perform routine monitoring for total coliform, and to provide the NMED with monthly operation reports.

The Lumberton MDWCA has also been ordered both to provide its members a sufficient amount of water for human consumption until the water system achieves full compliance with the regulations and to conduct a feasibility study to determine what options it has available to obtain and maintain long-term compliance with drinking water regulations.

In order to assist the system with funding for these needed improvements, NMED has supported the granting of \$400,000 to Lumberton from the New Mexico Finance Authority. These monies are being used to pay for the engineering and construction of a system that will eliminate these water quality problems.

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A boil water order also remains in effect for the water system until the condition of the water improves. This order advises consumers to boil their water for no less than five minutes before drinking, cooking or washing dishes.

The Lumberton MDWCA provides piped drinking water to approximately 100 year-round residents living in the community of Lumberton near Dulce.

Failure to comply with the requirements of the order may result in civil penalties.

The Drinking Water Bureau implements the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations requirements. The Bureau's mission is to preserve, protect, and improve New Mexico's drinking water quality for present and future generations. Emphasis is placed on upholding the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and providing technical assistance, system oversight and community outreach about safe drinking water.

For additional information, contact Fernando Martinez, Acting Bureau Chief, NMED Drinking Water Bureau, at (505) 827-1400 x.1019, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED, at (505) 827-0314.

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